



REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

2

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY N/A			3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE N/A					
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) NDU-ICAF-93- R 24			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) Same		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION Industrial College of the Armed Forces		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable) ICAF-FAP	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION National Defense University		
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, D.C. 20319-6000			7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, D.C. 20319-6000		
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER AD-A278 299 		
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			10. SOURCE OF FUND PROGRAM ELEMENT NO. PRC NO		
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Education in Honduras - A Critical Profile					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Peter A. Wood					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Research		13b. TIME COVERED FROM Aug 92 TO Apr 93		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) April 1993	
				15. PAGE COUNT 39	
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES FIELD GROUP SUB-GROUP			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)		
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) SEE ATTACHED 					
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Judy Clark			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (202) 475-1889		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL ICAF-FAP

EDUCATION IN HONDURAS A CRITICAL PROFILE

PETER S. WOOD

This is a broad survey of the education industry in one of the least developed countries of the Western Hemisphere. Generally, education is a part of most nations' development plans, but seldom is accorded one of the highest priorities. As we are slowly realizing here in the United States of America, investing in human capital is essential for the economic, political and social well-being of all countries. Informed citizens, in a young democracy like Honduras, can ensure the political system's longevity, and foster a more dynamic economy as well as a more egalitarian society. Access to schooling has grown enormously, but much remains to be accomplished in raising quality and efficiency and matching educational output to the needs of the Honduran marketplace.

**1993
Executive Research Project
RS4**

Education in Honduras A Critical Profile

**Peter S. Wood
FO-1
Department of State**

Faculty Research Advisor
Dr. John E. Bokel



**The Industrial College of the Armed Forces
National Defense University
Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. 20319-6000**

94-11850



94 4 19 060

DISCLAIMER

This research report represents the views of the author and does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the National Defense University, or the Department of Defense.

This document is the property of the United States Government and is not to be reproduced in whole or in part for distribution outside the federal executive branch without permission of the Director of Research and Publications, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C. 20319-6000.

Accession For	
WEIS GRA&I	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By _____	
Distribution/ _____	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

EDUCATION IN HONDURAS - A PROFILE

CONTENTS

- A. Introduction
- B. Educational System -- a brief overview
- C. Teacher Training
- D. Elementary Education
- E. Secondary Education
- F. Vocational
- G. Post-Secondary Education
- H. Adult Education
- I. Specific Problems and Solutions

INTRODUCTION

This is a broad-gauged look at the education industry in one of the least developed countries of the Western Hemisphere. This wasn't always the case! When Europe was in the grip of the "dark ages," the Mayan civilization in Honduras was flourishing. Its intellectual accomplishments in the scribal arts, mathematics and astronomy rival those of the ancient Arab and Hindu worlds. The fortunes of these two cultures reversed themselves subsequently, and now Honduras is hoping an improved education system will help it regain a place in the sun. Education is commonly one of the principal aspects addressed by any nation's development plan. As we are slowly realizing here in our own backyard, investing in human capital is essential for the economic, political and social well-being of all countries. For a young democracy like Honduras, informed citizens can ensure the political system's longevity, and foster a more dynamic economy, and possibly a more egalitarian society. As Frederick Harbison suggests in his primer on education sector analysis (1), my study concentrates on the following areas: access, aims of the system, constraints, and efficiency. Before delving into the details, however, let's look at a brief overview of the political/economic situation in Honduras.

ECONOMICS -- By traditional economic standards, Honduras is one of the poorest and least developed nations in all of Latin America. The gross national product per capita has been stagnant at about \$519 for the past 15 years or so. The economy is based mainly on agriculture, the main products being bananas (Honduras is the original 'banana republic'), coffee, fruits, shrimp, sugar, grains and livestock. There are extensive forest, marine and mineral resources. Industry (textiles, cement, wood products, cigars, foodstuffs) accounts for 15% of gross domestic product. The latest figures place the unemployment rate at 12%, but actual underemployment is estimated to be in the 30-40% range.

During most of the 1980s, Honduras achieved steady, if unspectacular, economic growth, partly due to sizeable US assistance. Starting in 1990, the Honduran Government (GOH) initiated a far-reaching economic structural reform program. Honduras paid off a substantial part of its arrears to international financial institutions during the same period. Also, in September, 1991, the US forgave \$434 million in bilateral debt. This forgiveness, the largest to date in Latin America, eliminated 96% of Honduras' bilateral debt to the US. These improvements have set up a very strong foundation for long-term economic growth. One of the unavoidable trade-offs has been some short-term pain, however, for the majority of Hondurans in the form of higher urban unemployment and reduced disposable income. In 1991, the economy grew by 2%. Inflation was 23%, which is actually low by Latin American standards.

POLITICS -- Honduras is a democratic constitutional (1982) republic. The President and Congress are both elected for 4-year terms. There are two major political parties and several very small ones. The armed forces, independent media, and organized labor all wield significant political power. The most recent military coup took place in 1978, but civilian government returned only three years later. Hondurans view regional political and economic integration as a high priority, and President Rafael Leonardo Callejas is one of the leaders in this effort.

With this broad background, what does the education system look like in general?

EDUCATION -- The pattern of educational development in Honduras is typically Hispanic American: very elitist, with most resources concentrated in the urban areas. There is a university that emphasizes preparation for traditional professions. The secondary schools' main goal is college preparation. Universal primary education has been decreed by law for over a century. This is not yet a reality in many rural areas, although the nationwide attendance figure has risen sharply in recent years. As in many Latin American countries, the thrust of educational reform in the past 30 years has emphasized technical/vocational education. Recent efforts have focused on primary schools. During the same period, the biggest constraint to improvement has been insufficient financing, a situation that has been rectified significantly in recent years. Internal efficiency, particularly at the primary level, is also a serious problem.

According to the Encyclopedia of Comparative Education, "The social/economic context is more extreme in Honduras than in other Central American nations. Poverty is more acute, social divisions sharper, and the economy is more rural and historically less dynamic than in almost any other Latin American country. The dysfunctionality of existing education systems to development needs, and the size of the socioeconomic problems that improved education is meant to solve, are greater in Honduras than in most other countries of the hemisphere."(2) On the other hand, Honduras is fortunate to have an ethnically homogeneous society and has thus been spared some of the ethnic friction that plagues neighboring countries.

The World Bank points out (3) that Honduras made considerable progress in recent years in increasing the access to education. Enrollment in primary education is almost universal, with about 95% of appropriate aged children enrolling in first grade. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reports that access to secondary education has been growing, from 16% in 1973 to 33% in 1986 (4). Enrollment has risen faster than resources, however, and this has been a formidable constraint on efforts at improving quality. Honduras has the lowest literacy rate and the highest student/teacher ratio, in primary education, in Central America.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM - A BRIEF OVERVIEW

DIRECTION - The overall responsibility for the education sector in Honduras is vested in two institutions: the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the National University of Honduras (NUH). Their responsibilities are broken down as follows (5):

MOE---pre-school

primary education

secondary education

teacher training

NUH---all university level

education

The NUH is autonomous under provisions of the national constitution. Management of the educational system is extremely centralized. Many bureaucratic activities, such as personnel actions and contracting are handled by the president himself (6)! At the same time, regional and local supervision is not very effective. The supervisors lack authority, and don't have sufficient travel funding to cover their typically large, spread out districts. At the local level, community investment is encouraged for school construction and furnishings, but for little else. Schools typically do little to encourage a close relationship with their communities. Parent associations, though mandated by law, seldom meet. This is not surprising in the rural areas where poverty and illiteracy are endemic.

Teacher's unions exist, and have been aggressive in the past, but they have

not taken to the streets since 1982 when a new president was elected on promises of economic reform and prosperity for all, thus raising hopes unrealistically high. Confrontational tactics seldom work well in Honduras and this time was no exception. The two sides engaged in protracted negotiations and eventually forged an agreement and modus operandi that have continued to work reasonably well to this day.

STRUCTURE - The educational system consists of four levels:

- PRE-PRIMARY. This level is for 4 to 6 year olds and consists of three grades. Schooling at this age is not compulsory and is still at the embryonic stage of development (7) with an enrollment of only 10% of the age group. Most pre-schools are in the urban areas. Faced with scarce resources, the MOE has been unable to place a high priority on this level. The quality of pre-school education is therefore low.
- PRIMARY. This level consists of six grades for children from 7 to 14 years old. It is free and compulsory.
- SECONDARY. This is divided into two cycles. The common cycle, a purely academic program, lasts three years. It is followed by a 'diversified' cycle lasting two or three years and offering either academic or vocational programs.
- HIGHER EDUCATION. This includes the main university (NUH), and twelve other institutions offering specialized programs in teacher training, agriculture, forestry, and other types of vocational training including military and police. Programs in adult education

AGE**DIAGRAM OF BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM**

18 - 23	UNIVERSITY TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE
15 - 18	SECONDARY SCHOOL-SPECIALIZED - TECHNICAL - ACADEMIC - TEACHER TRAINING (PRIMARY) - AGRICULTURE - VOCATIONAL
12 - 15	SECONDARY SCHOOL - "COMMON" CYCLE GENERAL ACADEMIC CURRICULUM
6 - 12	PRIMARY SCHOOL
3 - 6	PRE-SCHOOL

are also available.

CURRICULUM - The MOE determines curricula, subjects, and timetables. These are uniform for the whole country. On the other hand, examinations and promotions are conducted and determined at the local school level (8). Given the generally low level of education of teachers, this would seem to be an area ripe for reform.

This same factor of the low education level of teachers, existing at both the primary and secondary levels, is a major obstacle to curricular reform. Other constraints are the low social status of primary teachers, and problems related to teacher training. The high popular esteem of traditional academic and professional fields inhibits initiatives to relate the curriculum to new vocational and professional fields of study.

MAJOR PROBLEMS - As previously mentioned, FINANCING systemic improvements has been a serious problem. Primary education in Honduras is financed in three ways: public or private funds, and assistance provided by external donors.

---PUBLIC--Public education already receives over 20% of the national budget (9), and prospects for increasing that portion are not bright. These funds cover most of the operating costs of running the system. Improving systemic efficiency is therefore a high priority.

---PRIVATE--The Honduran Constitution makes it next to impossible to generate private sources of increased funding for schools, public or private. There is pressure to change this, however. The number of private schools has increased in the last decade from 5% to 10% of the total number of primary schools.

---EXTERNAL DONORS--Improvements in the educational system, particularly at the primary level, the government's highest priority, are funded for the most part through external aid. The major donors are (10): U.S.A.(AID), Japan, World Bank, Holland, the United Nations Fund for Population Assistance, and the Organization of American states. All of these organizations actively assist in improving the educational systems in other countries of Latin America as well.

A major effort has to be undertaken to improve the PLANNING of sectoral development, to include: budget preparation, interministerial coordination, and coordination of all educational projects and programs that receive external assistance. Educational reform/development in Honduras won't take major strides unless the national leadership makes it a priority.

Now that we have covered some of the systemic issues, it is time to shift the focus to the sectoral level.

TEACHER TRAINING

PRIMARY--Honduras has 12 teacher-training institutions, called "normal schools," which produce nearly all of the 24,000 primary school teachers. Teacher training follows 6 years of primary school and the first 3 years of secondary school (the common cycle). The program lasts 3 years and thus primary teachers begin their careers with 12 years of formal education.

In 1985, the MOE embarked on a program to update the teacher training curriculum. It was completed two years later and emphasizes practice rather than theory as well as providing the aspiring teachers with hands-on student teaching experience at an earlier stage of training. The general aim of the new program is to make the graduates more productive and efficient.

Some of the main problems with preservice teacher training are:

--Generally, no more than half the annual 3000 graduates will be employed in the school system. The ones who do find jobs are not always the best teachers, due to political intervention or other factors. Many of the normal school entrants have no intention of seeking employment as teachers.

--Funding is inadequate.

--Normal school facilities and instructional materials are generally

mediocre, but large investment here is hard to justify due to the systemic inefficiency mentioned above.

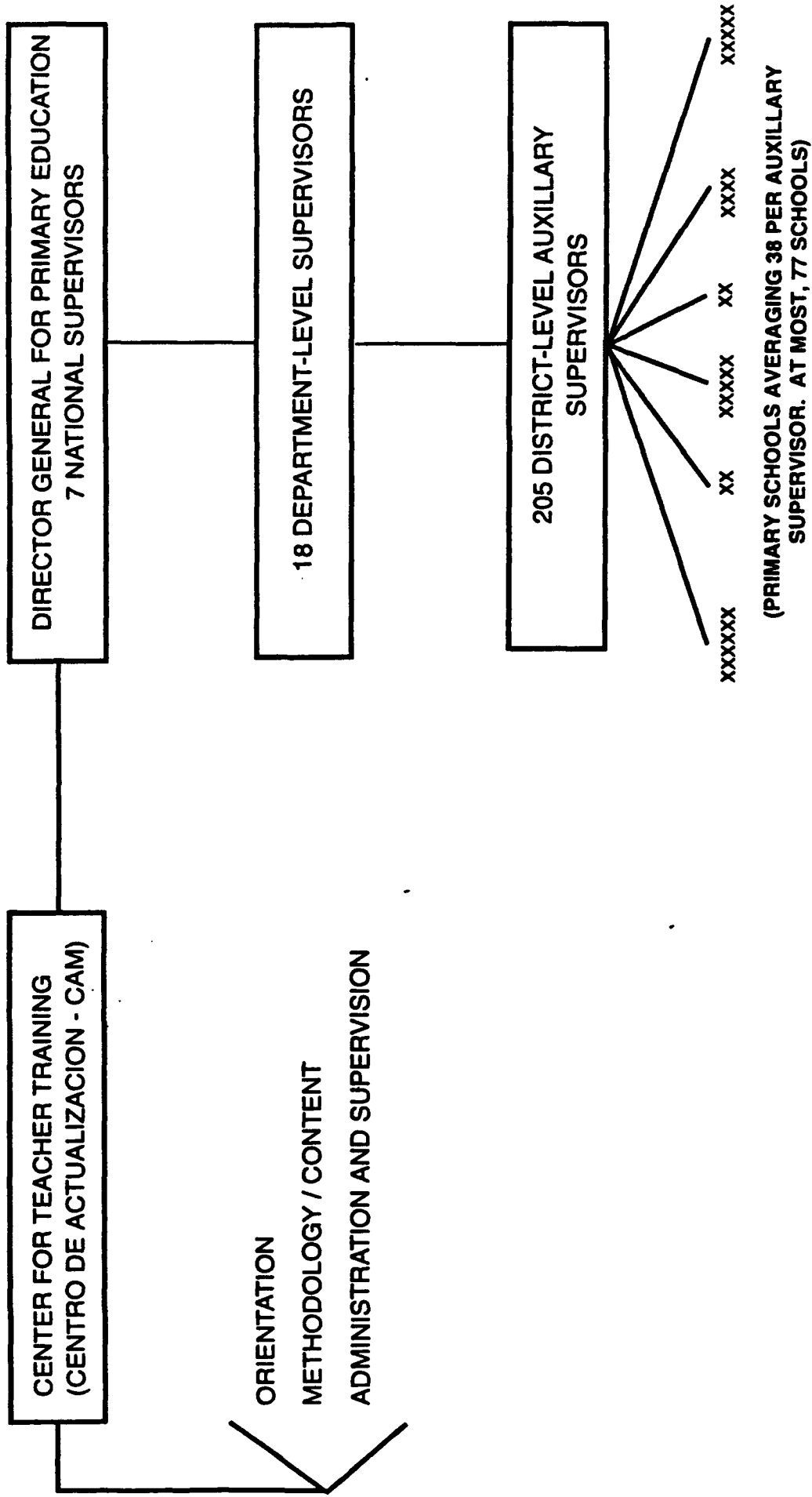
--Training does not prepare graduates for the different environments they may face (eg.urban, rural, multigrade). Likewise, the curriculum is weak on content, instructional materials development, and classroom management.

--Systemic interaction between normal schools and the neighboring primary schools is lacking.

In-service teacher training has recently received more attention due to the overall development strategy of the government of Honduras (GOH), which emphasizes, among other areas, the need for a more productive education system, and is focused at the primary school level. Responsibility for in-service training rests with the MOE Office of the Director General of Primary Education (see diagram).

In 1982, the GOH created the Center for Teacher Training (CAM) to centralize and accelerate in-service teacher training. Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, CAM is capable of providing training programs for all 24,000 primary teachers. CAM staff members have received special training at various universities in the U.S. and Honduras. The Japanese recently funded the creation of another teacher training institution that goes by the acronym INICE.

INSERVICE TEACHER TRAINING ORGANIZATION



Results of the efforts of these institutions have not yet been documented, but there are some problems/constraints they are having to confront, while providing training. For example, actual contact time between in-service teachers and trainers is limited by financial shortcomings, logistical problems of distance and rugged terrain, and the fact that some trainers/supervisors are overburdened by as many as 70 schools. The need to utilize new technologies, such as radios and distance learning, to overcome the above, is another hurdle. In addition, they need to deal with the adverse effects of poor health and nutrition on learning.

SECONDARY-- The National Pedagogical University (NPU) provides a 4-year program for producing secondary school teachers. Some teachers at this level also manage to obtain a university education in fields related to those they teach. Nevertheless, at this time, only about 40 percent of secondary teachers are qualified for the jobs they hold.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Access to primary education in Honduras is the highest in Central America (excluding Panama), at nearly 100 percent (11). This is due to a deliberate GOH policy resulting in construction of hundreds of new classrooms and the addition of 800 new teaching positions during the 1980s. There are now 7300

elementary schools, mostly rural. Although nearly universal access is good politically, it is a constant struggle to maintain and improve quality and efficiency.

Primary schools have few resources for maintenance. Broken desks, neglected grounds, inadequate sanitation, and lack of water are common. Although blackboards and textbooks are usually provided, other equipment such as charts, globes are not. Communities do not play a role in school maintenance, though they may help with initial construction. A USAID project made some progress in correcting some of these deficiencies (1980-1986) but lack of local resources have erased some of the gains.

Due to the high numbers of dropouts and repeaters, the completion rate for the primary grades is the lowest in Central America. Nationwide, in 1987 (12) 46% of those who entered the first grade would successfully graduate from sixth grade. As of 1982 (13), out of every 1,000 students who entered first grade, 35 would finish high school and only one would obtain a university degree. These figures are much worse in the rural areas where the average educational level is less than the equivalent of a second-grade education in the U.S.

The causes for the above inefficiency can be grouped in two areas (14):

SOCIO-ECONOMIC

poverty
malnutrition
adult illiteracy
need to help on family farm-
(rural areas)

SCHOOL RELATED

high student/teacher ratio: 38/1
inadequately trained teachers
shortages of teaching materials
lack of community support
poor teacher supervision

Possibly the biggest single reason for the inefficiency is the prevalence of multigrade classrooms where teachers handle more than one grade level simultaneously. In the rural areas, with 88 percent of the schools, the ratio of teachers to schools is 2.3 to 1.

Inequitable resource allocation favoring urban schools severely retards nationwide efficiency. The rural student-teacher ratio of 42:1 contrasts unfavorably with the urban ratio of 32:1. In some rural areas, the ratio of students to classrooms may be as high as 83:1! In other words, rural teachers must be 50-75 percent more efficient than their urban colleagues, an impossible expectation. This rural/urban imbalance is a problem the world over and requires strong national as well as local leadership to overcome.

In the issue of quantity versus quality, the GOH has clearly opted for the former where primary education is concerned. However, both are important. The present high level of access, combined with Honduras' high birth rate (though it is declining), and high retention rates in primary grades make it possible to envision overcrowded future classrooms that would make teaching totally impossible. At the same time, the GOH is already overburdened economically with the present need for adequate classroom space. Clearly, the GOH must make a major effort to improve primary school efficiency (eg., reduce the number of repeaters and dropouts).

A very recent study (15) done by Harvard University (financed by USAID) focused in detail on this very problem in an effort to identify where to direct policy interventions. The study's main findings were:

- Teachers' classroom behavior is a critical factor. For example, teachers who expect success produce more successful students.
- Repeating grades doesn't help learning.
- Socio-economic factors are important.
- Attending pre-school helps.
- Multigrade teachers have more repeaters.
- Textbooks are important.
- Real access to school time varies greatly; the more time spent in school the more the learning.

These findings resulted in the following recommendations (16) for policy interventions being made to the MOE, in 1991:

- Expand pre-schools

- Focus teacher training on the above issues
- Improve student assessment
- Increase staffing in multigrade schools
- Improve time management in classrooms
- Resist automatic promotion

The Primary Education Efficiency Project, a joint effort (begun in 1986 and extending through 1994) between the GOH and USAID, addresses some of the above deficiencies. The project consists of the following interrelated components:

- Textbook production, including instructional materials, in four subject areas (math, science, Spanish, social studies) for grades 1-6;
- Training of all teachers in the new materials;
- Production of learning objectives and achievement tests for all subject areas;
- Creation of a research unit within the MOE to study the causes of school inefficiency;
- School construction, renovation and maintenance;
- Produce interactive radio instructional materials.

An interim report done on this project in 1991 documented progress in all areas, but pointed to significant problems in the last component, which tried to involve the Honduran private sector. The business element was more interested in making a profit, and friction developed with the educators. Hardly a surprising occurrence! Preliminary reports done within the past year indicate progress is being made in reducing dropout rates and increasing

the number completing sixth grade.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary education in Honduras is divided into two cycles of three years each. The first cycle is for all students, aged 12-15 years. For the most part, it is the traditional curriculum of a broad academic education. The students study Spanish, civics, art, a foreign language, social studies, music, physical education, mathematics, and the natural sciences. Each student must also choose a practical subject from the agricultural, commercial, industrial, or home economics fields.(17) These requirements are the same for all secondary students in Honduras.

The second cycle of three years is specialized into five streams: technical, academic, teacher training (primary teachers), agriculture, and vocational. This cycle is for the 15-18 year olds. Some streams prepare the students to take up employment upon successfully completing their studies, although the employment rates have not been as high as expected. The difficulty in projecting the needs for the various streams is one of the major reasons for unemployment after completing secondary school.(18) Addressing this problem is one of the main objectives of the Ministry of Education (MOE) regarding secondary education. These problems aside, it is possible that we could gain some useful lessons for replication in the U.S.A from the vocational streams,

since improving vocational education is one of our own high priorities.

For both cycles of secondary school the curricula are set by the Government while the examinations and assessments are made within each school.

Vocational and educational guidance are also carried out within each school.

There is flexibility in streaming and students are allowed to make appropriate changes as their strengths and weaknesses become known. The retention rates in both cycles are high, in large part for the very same reasons as the high retention rates in the primary schools.

More than half of the secondary schools in Honduras are private. Many of these used to receive some Government assistance (19), but the amount of this cooperation has diminished in recent years. The majority of the secondary schools are in urban areas, and in the cities and large towns they are attended mostly by the middle and upper classes only. The poor and rural Hondurans are not part of the secondary cycles of education. Without parallel economic development, particularly in the rural areas, it is difficult to see how this will change. The wealthiest Hondurans send their children to the few good but expensive private schools (including the two American-run schools in Tegucigalpa) or they send them abroad to receive their secondary education.

Because of the large number of girls attending the primary teacher training stream in the second cycle, the total numbers of boys and girls at that level are about equal. Overall, in 1985 27% of the 12-18 age group attended secondary school, up from 4.3% in 1966, and only slightly below the Central American average.(20)

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Nation-wide vocational education begins in the first cycle of secondary education when the choice of one 'practical' subject is required (see previous diagram of the education system). For those in the non-academic stream of the second cycle, vocational education is the substance of the second cycle of secondary education, and may continue for some at special institutes after secondary school.

The Vocational Training Institute (INPOP) offers specialized in-service training programs for working adults. Annually, their programs serve about 35,000 workers in a variety of sectors: agriculture, industry, commerce and public administration. INPOP also offers basic skills training courses for the unskilled so that they may find work.

Since 1983 USAID has been working with Honduran business leaders (the Advisory Council for Human Resources Development--CADERH) in an effort to improve entry-level training and upgrading of current employees. USAID assistance has enabled CADERH to become a strong institution that can bring together the private sector and the training institutions, with an aim to developing the most appropriate training programs. In 1987 funding was increased and the scope of the activities increased to include:

- curriculum development and trade certification, including materials for 15 training institutions that serve the poor;
- in-plant training programs to meet high priority needs;
- training materials production and dissemination, including instructional modules and audio-visual pieces.

Each year several thousand people benefit from these programs. (21) The training centers have achieved a retention rate of more than 80% and a job placement rate of 75%.

In 1982, a group of businessmen established GEMAH (Gerentes y Empresarios Asociados de Honduras) to promote free enterprise and sponsor management training. USAID has provided support. As of September, 1988, GEMAH had given over 300 courses involving about 5,500 managers from both public and private sectors.

The World Bank policy on vocational education is that it should follow a solid secondary education that is academic. Employees need to have a strong academic background that employers or special institutes can then build on quickly. The knowledge and technology explosion taking place in the world today means that a low-level multi-year vocational training program can only turn out graduates that are out-of-date and unemployable. A solid academic background should provide fertile ground for further training that need not take years. (22) Honduras, with the assistance of USAID, is attempting to move in this direction.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

There are now just over 40,000 students enrolled in formal higher education programs in Honduras. The national university, NUH, with five campuses, accounts for nearly 80% of that enrollment. NUH is grappling with some fairly serious problems such as: programs that are not linked to national needs, open admission policies that have led to quality deterioration, weak faculty, and inadequate facilities. (23)

Altogether, the public universities produce only 1,500 graduates annually and require over 25 person-years of enrollment to create each of them. (24) There are fewer science students than in any other Central American country while the employment markets for the areas with the highest enrollments (law, medicine, civil engineering) are becoming saturated.

Honduras has several specialized schools of higher education. Undergraduate education in agriculture or forestry is offered at three different schools. However, these institutions produce less than 150 Honduran graduates annually, while agriculture faces a deficit of 8,100 trained employees yearly.

The Francisco Morazan' Military Academy provides the armed forces with trained soldiers. It has traditionally been seen as an upward mobility avenue for secondary school graduates from the less fortunate sectors of society, but in recent years the GOH has invested heavily in upgrading this institution. This has resulted in a marked increase in the number of applicants from all

segments of society. There is also a national police academy. In the section on teacher training it was pointed out that the Escuela Superior del Profesorado trains secondary school teachers. The Universidad Technologica Centro Americana (UNITEC) offers business, financial and computer science undergraduate and graduate level programs.

A number of Hondurans study at universities in the United States. USAID provides pre-college orientation for many and sponsors others who are studying such fields of importance to national development as small business development, health/population, agriculture and education.

ADULT EDUCATION

In Honduras adult education is provided by a wide range of different agencies and groups, making it impossible to come up with a total number of participants. Some of the programs are mentioned below.

Adult literacy programs are provided by the Ministry of Education, other government agencies, religious organizations, employers, and private businesses. In 1985, 27,400 adults participated in the Ministry of Education's course. (25)

The Ministry of Education also runs a four year accelerated primary education course for adults over the age of 18. In 1985, 23,362 adults participated in

this program. (26)

Community development and agrarian education programs are run by a number of agencies and organizations, as are vocational training courses for adults.(27)

Many of these adult educational opportunities are aimed at the under-served rural population. Because of the diversity and number of providers, it is difficult, if not impossible, to know the numbers reached and with what success they are reached.

SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

An obscure prophet of the American economic scene once prescribed "muddling through" as the remedy for our problems, and one is tempted to apply the same solution to Honduras' education ills! The emphasis should clearly be in the rural areas. Significant improvement in education won't occur there without massive parallel economic development. At the same time, the high birth rate needs to be brought under control or the already overcrowded classrooms will need balconies! Several ways of increasing primary school efficiency have already been mentioned and others are outlined below.

Since the Central American nations are small and close together and beset with some similar educational problems, it would appear that regional cooperation might be possible. Two areas that seem to offer possibilities are the

cooperative production of educational materials and distance teaching via radio.

The education bureaucracy needs to be decentralized. The principal donor agencies mentioned earlier have pointed this out and the idea is under discussion within the GOH, but the prospect of change is not promising.

Steps should be taken to foster more school/community involvement in rural areas, but this would appear to depend on significant economic development. Bringing the adult community into the schools for adult educational opportunities, such as study centers for distance-learning students, would help to generate interest in, and support for, the schools.

More pre-schools in the rural areas would help subsequent performance in primary schools.

The legal impediments to private-sector involvement in primary education should be removed. This may not be realistic politically and even if it can be accomplished, it may not solve many problems. Public/private cooperation in all education sectors has been problematic, with a lack of trust on the part of both sides. This is a problem that needs to be tackled at the highest level of the Honduran Government.

Having examinations set locally, given the low level of teacher skills, appears to be a problem crying for a solution - national exams. In fact, the MOE is working toward such a goal and prototype tests are being developed.

There are many political problems yet to be worked out and so progress has been slow.

For the rural multigrade schools I would suggest the following:

- Along with de-centralized control, more supervisors are needed.

 - Mentor teachers could also assist the weaker ones.

- Team-teaching could be used.

- "Each-one-teach-one", where older students help younger ones is apparently being tried on a limited basis.

- The use of radios along with self-learning materials could be greatly expanded. This method has been very successful in lower elementary math, using materials developed in Nicaragua.

It should be clear at this point that one can't expect dramatic changes in the Honduran education sector. The culture, economics and politics all indicate more "muddling along." Progress will be slow, and probably not very steady. Throughout this paper I have pointed out the likelihood for success or failure of numerous ideas or initiatives. In other instances this was impossible due to the lack of more complete information.

It is truly extraordinary that despite all the apparent interest over the years in educational development, Honduras has produced only one citizen with a doctoral degree in education! If this is an indicator of the real indigenous commitment to systemic improvement then it probably won't happen very fast. Education for the masses is seldom a high priority in developing countries, despite much lip service. The fortunate few take care of their own

schooling needs and the last thing they desire is more education for restive but poor masses of people who might clamor for a bigger piece of the pie. As in our own case, change requires committed leadership willing to take risks. It is not apparent that Honduras has enough of this at the national level. On the other hand, Hondurans are blessed with plenty of patience and relative political stability, both of which allow steady improvement, such as that which is now showing up in the Primary Education Efficiency Project, to take place. The resurgence of democracy that has taken place throughout Latin America in the past few years can't be sustained without educated/informed voters. It is this imperative that underlines the importance of education in this part of the world.

END NOTES

1. Harblson, pg. 23.
2. Vega, pg. 329.
3. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 1.
4. Honduras Primary Education Subsector Assessment, pg. 2.
5. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 1.
6. Honduras Primary Education Subsector Assessment, pg. v.
7. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 1.
8. Vega, pg. 332.
9. Honduras Primary Education Subsector Assessment, pg. 11.
10. *ibid.*, pg. 5.
11. *ibid.*, pg. 111.
12. *ibid.*, pg. 111.
13. Honduras, a country study, pg. 90.
14. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 4.
15. McGinn, pg. 1.
16. *ibid.*, pg. 1.
17. Vega, pg. 331.
18. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 5.
19. Vega, pg. 331.
20. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 2.
21. Hays, pg. 25.
22. Vocational and Technical Education and Training, pg. 9.
23. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 2.
24. USAID Honduras Internal Report..., pg. 2.

25. Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, pg. 3.
26. *ibid*, pg. 3.
27. Vega, pg. 331.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- , background notes: Honduras, (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 1992).
- Chesterfield, Ray, Basic Education: Review of Experience, (Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Excellence, 1992).
- Corrales, Dr. Carlton, personal interview, February, 1993. Program Manager for USAID education projects in Honduras, through Academy for Educational Development, Washington, D.C.
- Harblson, Frederick H., Education Sector Planning for Development of Nation-Wide Learning Systems, (American Council of Education, 1973).
- Hays, Frances, Program Overview: Educational and Human Resources Development, Latin American and the Caribbean 1992, (Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development, 1992).
- , Honduras, a country study, (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1983).
- , Honduras Primary Education Subsector Assessment, (Washington, D.C.: Academy for Educational Development, 1989).
- King, Edmund J., Other Schools and Ours, (New York: Holt, 1967).
- , Los Perfiles Educativos de America Latina: Honduras, (Washington, D.C.: Organization of American States, 1984).
- Martin, Richard, personal interviews January/February, 1993. USAID/Washington and former education program officer in Tegucigalpa (1984-88).
- McGinn, Noel F. et al, Attending School and Learning or Repeating and Leaving, (Cambridge: Bridges, 1991).
- Thomas, R. Murray, International Comparative Education, (New York: Pergamon Press, 1990).
- , Primary Education, (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1990).
- , Staff Appraisal Report: Honduras, Rural Primary Education Management Project, (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1987).
- , USAID Honduras Internal Report on School Completion Rates, (Tegucigalpa: USAID, 1992).
- Vega, D., "Honduras," in T. Neville Postlewaite, Encyclopedia of Comparative Education and National Systems of Education, (New York: Pergamon Press, 1988).

-----, Vocational and Technical Education and Training.
(Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1991).